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ABSTRACT

A 2 X 3 (with repeated measures) design explored the nature of nonverbal communication (NVC), associated with judging one to be a leader or a follower. This study explored several aspects of the folk maxim "It is not what you say, but how you say it." The relationship investigated was between on one hand (1) communicator's NVC, (2) mode of presentation (MOP) of stimuli, and (3) sex perceiver, and, on the other hand, (a) accuracy of judgment, (b) judgment time, and (c) nature of NVC critical traits associated with perception of a leader, and those associated with follower. The sample consisted of forty-eight nonvolunteer undergraduates. The ratio of males to females was 1:1. The results indicated that NVC was highly significant in perception of both leader and follower. Particular aspects of NVC associated with leaders, and others with followers were isolated. In conclusion, the results of this study clearly demonstrated how potent a number of NVC behavior items are associated with our judging a person to be a leader or a follower. (Author/BW)

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The Making of a Leader*

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ABSTRACT

A 2X3 (with repeated measures) design explored the nature of nonverbal communication (NVC), associated with judging one to be a leader or a follower. NVC was highly significant in perception of both leader and follower. Particular aspects of NVC associated with leader, and others with follower, were isolated.

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Only limited research has investigated the validity of the maxim: "It is not what you say, but how you say it." The present study explored several aspects of that folk wisdom. Do differences in person's nonverbal communication (NVC) lead to differences in perceiving him as a leader or a follower? Are such differences in perception related to whether we both see and hear him, only see him, or only hear him? What kind of NVC behavioral items are used in our judging a person a leader or a follower?

This study investigated the relationship between, on one hand, (1) communicator's NVC, (2) mode of presentation (MOP) of stimuli, and (3) sex of perceiver, and , on the other hand, (a) accuracy of judgment, (b) judgment time, and (c) nature of NVC critical Traits associated with perception of a leader, and those associated with follower.

METHOD

Subjects. The sample consisted of forty-eight (48) non-volunteer undergraduates. The ratio of males to females was 1:1.

Design. A balanced 2x3 (with repeated measures) factorial design (Figure 1) employed sex of S, three levels of MOP (audio-visual /A-V/, visual-only /V-O/, and audio-only /A-O/), and responses to Nature of Portrayal, that is, NVC manipulation consistency of Leader and Follower film segments as repeated measures. The Ss were randomly assigned to the six treatment groups.

Stimuli. A professional actor, delivering a 250 word monologue, was photographed with a 16mm sound movie camera (black and white). He was seated, three-quarter profile, as if engaged in informal conversation.

Figure 1 - Experimental Design

MOP	Audio-visual		Visual-only		Audio-only	
S's Sex	M	F	M	F	M	F
NVC*	L-F	L-F	L-F	L-F	L-F	L-F
N =	8	8	8	8	8	8

*Repeated measures variable (responses to the Nature of Portrayal variable, that is, to Leader and Follower film segments)

To manipulate Nature of Portrayal or NVC variable, the actor was filmed twice with the instruction to deliver the monologue once as a leader would, and then once again, as a follower would. More specifically, the actor was allowed to vary only the nonverbal aspects of the monologue (voice, gesture, facial contortion, etc.) while delivering the same verbal message in both films; his dress, lighting and setting remained constant. Each of these two films was cut into eight segments, each approximately twelve seconds long. The sixteen segments, eight from the Leader and eight from the Follower film, were presented to each S in random order.

To manipulate MOP, one-third of the Ss viewed the films with sound (audio-visual treatment), one-third viewed only the visual portion of the films (visual-only treatment), and one-third only heard the audio portion of the films (audio-only treatment).

Procedure. Each S was tested individually and was instructed to evaluate the actor in each film segment in terms of leadership. More specifically, the S was told to stop the presentation of each film by pulling a lever, as soon as he could decide whether the actor appeared to be a leader or a follower. Judgement time (number of seconds until S stopped a presentation) for each film segment was automatically recorded. Each time a S stopped a presentation of a film segment he was asked: (1) whether the person in the film appears to be a leader or a follower, and (2) to describe the critical behavior item which made him stop the presentation of the film segment and decide that the actor's portrayal was that of a leader or a follower; for example, some particular aspect of his voice, or a gesture, a grimace, etc. In summary, each S made judgements as to whether the actor portrayed a leader or a follower sixteen times, and each time was asked to describe some aspect of the actor's behavior which was critical to making his judgement; in eight of these films the actor portrayed a leader, while in the remainder he portrayed a follower.

RESULTS

Two sets of analyses, both using 2x3 ANOVAs with repeated measures dealt with two sets of data. The first set of data consisted of D.V. measures of (a) accuracy of judgement, and (b) judgement time, while the second, concerned with nature of Critical Traits of a leader or a follower, consisted of verbal

description of aspects of NVC which made a S decide that the communicator in a particular film segment was a leader or a follower.

Accuracy of Judgement

In 88% of judgements the Ss were correct as to the nature of the portrayal. In other words, they judged the actor to be a leader in the film segments where he tried by manipulating his NVC to portray a leader. Likewise, they judged the actor to be a follower in the film segments where, through NVC, he endeavored to portray a follower. Although sex and MOP did not significantly influence the correctness of judgement, the nature of the portrayal did ($F=84.39$, $df=1/42$, $p.< 001$); the Follower portrayal was judged correctly more often (93% of the time) than was true of the Leader portrayal (83% of the time).

Judgement Time

The nature of the portrayal also influenced the judgement time ($F=110.34$, $df=1/42$, $p<.001$), with lesser time associated with identifying a Follower ($\bar{X}=4.8$ sec.) as compared to that necessary to identify a Leader ($\bar{X}=5.7$ sec.). Sex of S, MOP and first and second order interaction effects were non-significant.

Critical Traits

Subjects responses concerning what made them judge a particular portrayal to be that of a leader (or a follower) were content analyzed using thirty-three content categories. Each category, such as Loud Voice, No Pauses, Head Movement, etc., represented a Critical Trait. Frequencies associated

with each Critical Trait category were the D.V. measures for 33 separate 2x3 ANOVAs in this stage of analysis. Each 2x3 ANOVA (with repeated measures) employed the two levels of the sex of S, three levels of MOP and frequencies associated with the particular Critical Trait responses to Leader and Follower film segments as repeated measures.

Nature of Portrayal. NVC manipulation by the actor or nature of portrayal gave highly significant results with the Critical Traits data. In case of all of the 33 categories, Nature of Portrayal, that is Leader versus Follower film segments, yielded significant differences (all at $p<.001$) in frequencies of Critical Traits used by Ss in judging the actor to be a leader or a follower (Table 1). These results clearly indicated that particular NVC behavior items were associated with Ss perceiving the communicator as a leader, while other NVC behavior items influenced Ss to judge him to be a follower. For example, such NVC as Loud Voice, Good Eye Contact and No Pauses, were used by Ss to judge the actor to be a leader, while Squinting Eyes, Slouched and Fidgeting were used to judge him as a follower.

MOP. Highly significant results with the Critical Traits data were also obtained as a function of MOP manipulation. Main effect for MOP was significant with data from 30 out of the 33 Critical Trait categories (26 of them at $p<.001$). Most of these are artifacts however, resulting from the relationship between the nature of many of the Critical Traits and the three levels of MOP. It is rather clearly an artifact of this design

Table 1 - Critical Traits

Critical Trait	Frequency of Response Means						ANOVA P values[xxx]						
	A-V*		V-O		A-O								
	L**	F	L	F	L	F	A	B	C	AB	AC	BC	ABC
Loud Voice	1.3	0.0	1.4	0.0	2.3	0.0			3				
Good Eye Contact	10.6	0.0	11.3	0.0	0.0	0.0		3	3			3	
No Pauses	7.4	0.0	6.4	0.0	11.9	0.0		1	3			1	
Strong Voice	7.3	0.0	4.9	0.0	12.1	0.0		3	3	1		3	
Gesturing	16.9	3.1	16.4	2.1	8.1	0.0	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Spoke Quickly	2.4	0.0	5.9	0.4	5.1	1.6		1	3				
Emph.on Cert.Words	11.9	0.0	0.6	0.0	11.9	0.4		3	3			3	
No Fidgeting	3.5	0.0	2.6	0.0	0.0	0.0		3	3			3	
Sitting Upright	0.6	0.0	12.8	0.0	0.1	0.0		3	3			3	
Clear Enunciation	7.4	1.3	0.0	0.0	9.0	0.0		3	3			3	
Eyes Wide Open	3.3	0.5	1.5	0.1	0.0	0.0		1	1				
Wide Mouth Mov.	7.0	0.0	12.1	0.0	0.0	0.0		3	3			3	
Holding Head Erect	9.9	0.1	11.0	0.0	0.0	0.0		3	3			3	
Fidgeting	0.0	16.9	0.4	17.8	0.0	0.0		3	3			3	
Pauses	0.0	5.4	0.0	4.1	0.0	17.5		3	3			3	
Bad Eye Contact	0.1	11.5	0.4	6.5	0.0	0.0		3	3			3	
Squinting Eyes	0.0	5.4	0.4	5.5	0.0	0.0		3	3			3	
Shifty Eyes	0.4	10.3	0.9	9.1	0.0	0.0		3	3			3	
Slouched	0.0	12.6	0.0	11.9	0.0	0.0		3	3			3	
Squirming in Seat	0.3	13.4	0.0	11.0	0.0	0.6	1	3	3		1	3	
Little Mouth Mov.	0.0	4.8	0.0	12.4	0.0	0.0		3	3			3	
Spoke Slowly	0.0	4.3	0.1	4.1	0.3	9.5		3	3			3	
Head Movement	0.5	2.6	1.0	3.3	0.0	0.0		2	3		1	2	
Shrugged Shoulders	0.1	3.9	0.3	3.8	0.0	0.0		3	3			3	
Looks Down	0.4	6.9	0.0	12.3	0.0	0.0		3	3			3	
Low Voice	0.4	2.1	0.0	0.6	0.0	2.0			3				
Wrinkled Forehead	0.4	11.0	1.3	14.6	0.0	0.0		3	3		2	3	
Sing Song Voice	0.0	9.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	5.4		3	3			3	
Quavering Voice	0.1	13.4	0.0	0.1	0.0	13.0		3	3			3	
High Pitched Voice	0.5	5.8	0.0	0.0	0.3	5.5		3	3			3	
Whiney Voice	0.1	14.3	0.0	0.0	0.9	14.6		3	3			3	
Monotone Voice	0.0	1.9	0.0	0.0	1.3	5.0		3	3			3	

*Treatment groups - A-V=audio-visual, V-O=visual-only, A-O=audio-only.
** L=Mean frequency of responses to Leader film segments
F=Mean frequency of responses to Follower film segments
*** p values associated with F ratio's; [1]p<.05, [2]p<.01, [3]p<.001
Column A=main effect - S's sex
Column B=main effect - MOP
Column C-main effect - NVC (Nature of Portrayal variable)
Columns AB, AC, BC, and ABC=interaction effects

that, for example, there is a significant main effect for MOP with data from Clear Enunciation category: Ss in the visual-only treatment groups, as compared to those from audio-visual and audio-only ones, simply did not use such aspects of NVC as enunciation or loudness in judging the actor to be a leader or a follower.

Sex. Main effect for Sex of S was significant in only two out of the 33 ANOVAs.

Interaction effects. While Sex x MOP interaction effects were significant in only two out of 33 ANOVAs, and Sex x Nature of Portrayal effects were significant four out of 33 times, MOP x Nature of Portrayal effects were significant in 28 out of 33 ANOVAs. These latter are again mostly artifacts, reflecting differential use of various Critical Trait categories as a function of S's assignment to a particular level of MOP treatment group.

Conclusions

NVC has emerged as highly related to our perception of leadership. The results of this study clearly demonstrate how potent a number of NVC behavior items are associated with our judging a person to be a leader or a follower.

Regardless of "what you say," "how you say it" has been shown to have a dramatic effect on "whether others perceive you as a leader or a follower." Although caution must be exercised in unqualified generalization of these findings, they provide a suggestive new approach, not only to such areas as social perception, stereotyping and social judgement, but also to more applied efforts in organizational behavior and leadership training.